

ble to drive in. Folks is gettin so kind o' fashionable, too, the best place fer a 'plain old' woman is to home

"Tom's somewhere around. You can ask him about the rose if you want to. But," she added, as Nell rose to her feet, "we've never had no such doin's here, an' I don't believe Kedarsville folks will like the church all fixed up that way."

But Nell heard a whistle outside, and hastened out from Mrs. Keith's not exactly inspiring presence, to where a tall boy of seventeen was crossing the yard. "How do you do, Tom?" she said. "I had to come out here to see you, as we do not see you any more at church."

"That's so," Tom answered, with a slightly embarrassed air. "I have sorter dropped out. The fact is I've grown tired of that old church; the paint's dingy on the outside, and the paper's dingy on the inside, and that place behind the pulpit where the snow leaked, I've looked at till it's give me the nightmare. I'd rather go out in the woods of a Sunday, especially now it's spring."

"Well, we are going to try and make the church look pretty for once next Sunday, Easter, and I want to know if you will let us have your big pink rose—your grandmother says it's yours—towards it?"

As Nell explained their plans Tom's face brightened. "That's something like it. Have the rose? Yes, and anything else I can get you."

"You are ever so kind," and then, a sudden thought coming to Nell, "but I'll tell you what I want most, and that is to have you come and help us arrange the church."

"What, me?" and Tom blushed with pleasure.

"Yes; I remember at our school picnics there was never anyone had as many ideas as you."

"All right, I'll be on hand, then. Would you want any outdoor flowers?"

"Yes, everything."

"I'll get some, then; and we've some cherry trees in blossom, too."

"But would you want to spare them?"

"Yes, they are not over-good cherries; besides, the tree couldn't ripen all the blossoms, anyway."

"Then we will expect you at the church Saturday afternoon, with all that you can bring."

It was quickly noised abroad—the girls took pains it should be—what was under way. Kedarsville was quite divided on the subject; and not a few there were, like old Mrs. Keith, of the decided opinion that they would not like it. But all the same, whether brought by interest, curiosity, or approval, everybody was on hand when the bell rang out on Easter morning. Indeed, it was many a day since the church had held such an audience.

And very attractive the old church looked. Tom Keith's tall pink rose held the place of honor, and there were Nell's lilies, and Beth's

palm, and Mrs. Deacon Green had sent a calla, and from others had come geraniums, pinks, and heliotrope, till all around the pulpit was a bower of blooming sweetness. Back of the minister an ivy had been twined, and Tom had deftly tacked boughs of the fragrant cherry blossoms over the soiled spot that had so displeased his eye.

The choir, too, had taken unusual pains with the music, and there seemed a new up lift in their voices as they led the congregation in the hymns. And when Ellen Parks came forward, and in her clear voice sang, "There is a Green Hill Far Away," the eye of more than one listener grew moist.

The day itself, its joy, its gladness, its triumph, had a new significance to the minister, and, with the flowers around him, and the lifted faces before him, a fresh inspiration seemed to thrill his words.

After service the little band of workers lingered after the people had passed out.

"I am so glad we did it," said Nell, "and I believe every one enjoyed it; even grandpa and old Mrs. Keith beamed approval in spite of themselves."

"Yes, it was fine," remarked Tom Keith; "if church was always like this I would come every Sunday."

"I have been thinking," said Rachel, "that if we young people tried, we might make it more like this. We might see that there are always flowers."

"Count me in on that," exclaimed Tom.

"Yes, and all of us," added Beth.

At that moment Mr. Avery came toward them. "I want to thank you all," he said, "for what you have done. It has given me new heart and courage for all the year."

"I think it has given us all something for the year," said Nell. "And now that Easter has come to Kedarsville, I feel very certain that it will always stay here."

Christian Life

Risen!

When in the starry gloom
They sought the Lord Christ's tomb.
Two angels stood in sight,
All dressed in dazzling white,
Who unto the women said,
"Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

O ye of this latter day,
Who journey the self-same way
Through morning's twilight gloom
Back to the shadowy tomb;
To you, as to them, was it said,
"Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

The Lord is risen indeed,
He is here for your love, for your need—
Not in the grave, or the sky.
But here where men live and die
And the true word that was said,
"Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

Wherever are tears and sighs,
Wherever are children's eyes
Where man calls man his brother,
And loves as himself another,
Christ lives! The angels said,
"Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

—Richard Watson Gilder.

DRAW NEAR WITH BOLDNESS. Heb. 4:16

J. M. BOWMAN

O how sin and wrong doing and unbelief separate from God! Not so much that God is angered but "your sins have separated between you and your God." These things drive one away from God. Some one said that the Bible will drive you from your sins, or your sins will drive you from the Bible. It is just so in relation to the Father.

And O how these things open the way so that unrest and uncertainty and sorrow rush in like a flood!

The Lord brought peace and once we rejoiced in it and life was rich and buoyant. But it is gone like the lost chord, and the flood settles down in the valley of life so heavy that our eyes become dimmed and we reel under the weight. And the darkness gathers so that we conclude after all that this is the way of this life; and we nerve ourselves to carry the load and call it the "Strenuous Life" and fall to boasting about it tho the heart almost breaks under it and cries:

"Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and His word?"

What peaceful hours I then enjoyed
How sweet their memory still!
But they have left an aching void
The world can never fill."

And O how we take up the battle of life, but in much fear! And how the dangers are looked for and pointed out, and the alarm sounded. It can be little better than that with all our good honest efforts to overcome all the obstacles and difficulties. It is not "The way of peace."

But O how gracious our God is! He sent his Son to bring us the life of rest and peace. This life is in Christ. We trustingly take him. "He that hath the Son hath the life" (I John 5:12, R. V.) He spared not His own Son, but delivered him up to shed his blood to redeem us from the curse and blight of sin. And he gloriously raised him from the dead, as this happy Easter time reminds us, to most powerfully show us that Jesus is, in truth the Son of God. (Rom. 1:4) And he has exalted him to his right-hand, and made him to be the Great High Priest for us; to make intercession for us and secure blessings and help.

In the old days of the priests the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies to burn incense and receive blessings for the people from the very presence of God, and as he came out he called to the people "Draw near" and with outstretched hands spoke the blessings of forgiveness and the promise of God's presence and help, and the humblest could go away in peace saying, "It is for me. The High Priest pronounced it upon me." How happy for us in our sorrows and trouble to know that Jesus is in the very presence of God to secure the favor and help of God for us. He is there for that very purpose and we can go freely and boldly to him and most surely find help in every time of need. Just draw near.

Longmont, Col.